

It will cost \$45 million to further improve the already fully functioning port of Umm Qasr while the President is proposing zero dollars to dredge ports in my district and elsewhere in the United States because he says we cannot afford it. He is asking to borrow \$45 million and send it to Iraq to further improve their ports, but he cannot find a penny for ports in the Pacific Northwest and other parts of the United States.

It is going to cost \$150 million for a national 911 system in Iraq. Mr. Speaker, is that so they can call the next time a rogue regime uprisings? What does this have to do with the war? The American people are going to borrow \$150 million because the President wants it, send it to Iraq to give them a 911 system.

Job centers, 22 centers, \$350,000 each. If we took the \$20.3 billion the President wants this Congress to borrow and spend on behalf of rebuilding the nation of Iraq, if we matched that dollar per dollar in the United States of America, if we borrowed \$20.3 billion to rebuild the infrastructure system in the United States, we could put 1 million Americans to work in the very near future, in addition to investing in our future, our economic productivity, our ports, our highways, our water systems, our electricity grid.

It is one thing to borrow money to invest in the United States of America; it is another thing to indebt the next two generations of Americans to borrow money to spend rebuilding Iraq. Mr. Wolfowitz told us they can pay for their own reconstruction. I guess that guy made about a \$50 billion mistake that is going to cost the American taxpayers, but he is still held in highest esteem by the Bush administration. He is still working there. He is still pumping out the same mistakes. How many more billions will he cost us before the President demands his resignation. This is outrageous that the American people are being asked to borrow this money. Instead of borrowing money, investing in infrastructure and putting a million Americans to work here, he is proposing more tax cuts. His last tax cut, the dividend tax cut, returned 5 cents on the dollar to the United States economy. If it is spent on infrastructure, we get \$7 for every dollar borrowed.

Mr. Speaker, let us get our priorities straight: America first.

REPEAL DEATH GRATUITY TAX

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. JONES of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I am back on the floor today to talk about the repeal of the death gratuity tax on the families who have given their loved ones to die for freedom in America.

Mr. Speaker, behind me are the faces of just a few of those who have died in

either Afghanistan or Iraq. In the year 2001, there were 292 families that received a bill from Uncle Sam in the way of a tax because their loved one died in uniform fighting for freedom. In the year 2002, there were 1,007 families that received a bill from Uncle Sam because their loved one died in uniform for freedom.

Already in 2003, it is well over 280 families.

Mr. Speaker, the history on this issue is that prior to 1991 or 1992, there was a \$3,000 death gratuity that was given by the government to the families whose husband or wife or daughter or son died in uniform. It could be in an accident or war situation.

□ 1500

The Congress in the early 1990s increased that from \$3,000 to \$6,000, but what happened is it did not go through the proper committee to take the tax off.

So, Mr. Speaker, I have a bill that is H.R. 693 to repeal this tax; and in fairness to the committee and to both sides, it has been supported by both sides. The committee of jurisdiction, the Committee on Ways and Means, included this language in a larger package to bring tax relief to the military, which was fine with me; but the Senate will not move the legislation. Mr. Speaker, I think it is absolutely unacceptable, deplorable that we do not take this tax off the families who are giving loved ones.

Let me show a photograph of a young boy whose name is Tyler Jordan. This was a shot in a national newspaper that I saw, and I was so touched by it that I wanted to have a copy of it. Tyler's father was a gunnery sergeant named Phillip Jordan. He was killed in Iraq. In the photograph of Tyler, he has an American flag that was taken off his father's coffin under his arms and he is looking at the father's coffin. How tragic that is within itself, but adding to that tragedy is that next year his family is going to get a bill from Uncle Sam, a bill of \$6,000, which is not enough; but we need to take this tax off so that the families who have lost loved ones will not be paying a penalty for giving the loved one who died for freedom and died for this country.

This week I received an e-mail from the father of Sergeant Jacob Frazier, and I want to read this, Mr. Speaker. It says, "Thank you for your support of H.R. 693. Our son, Sergeant Jacob Frazier, was killed in action on March 29, 2003, in Afghanistan. Upon being told we would be taxed on a portion of the \$6,000 benefit, I was shocked and insulted. My son was not married, but I am sure that there are numerous young widows that do not need another complication in their lives. Our country should not add to their burden with additional taxation. Let me know if I can do anything to help you here in Illinois to get this bill passed."

Mr. Speaker, I am going to call on the House leadership, both parties, and

ask the House leadership to please before we leave in November bring up H.R. 693, stand-alone bill. I have got many supporters from the Democratic side and the Republican side. Bring it to the floor, and let us morally do what is right for those families who have given their loved one.

Mr. Speaker, I actually wrote the President of the United States on September 17 and asked him to please use the executive office to contact the leadership in the House and the Senate, both parties, to move this legislation. In the last paragraph I wrote this sentence to the President of the United States: "Given the very little time left in this legislative session, failure to do so will result in more American military families not only giving a loved one for freedom but also suffering the unacceptable indignity of being taxed on that gift."

Mr. Speaker, we do a lot of good things around here and a lot of things we debate. We disagree, both parties and within our own parties. But this is one of those issues that it is simple. It is morally the right thing to do.

Mr. Speaker, I close by asking God to please bless our men and women in uniform and, God, please bless America.

QUESTIONS FOR THE BUSH ADMINISTRATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. McCOTTER). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. McDERMOTT) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, today in my e-mail I got five separate copies of an article that was put in the Atlanta Journal Constitution by a man named Max Cleland. Max Cleland is a Vietnam vet who lost his legs and one arm. He is a triple amputee, was a United States Senator, and in the last campaign they attacked him for being unpatriotic. Max is a hero in my book. The fact that he would raise questions about what the President of the United States is doing in Iraq and Afghanistan did not make him unpatriotic.

We are going to have a bill out here in a few days for \$87 billion, and the same White House is going to attack all of us if we raise any questions. Max's article starts with an erie kind of quote: "The public has been led into a trap from which it will be hard to escape with dignity and honor. They have been tricked into it by steady withholding of information. The Baghdad communiques are belated, insincere, incomplete." These "things have been far worse than we have been told, our administration more bloody and inefficient than the public knows. We are today not far from a disaster." That is a quote from a guy named T.E. Lawrence, Lawrence of Arabia, the Sunday Times of London, August 22, 1920.

The British know what they are into and they know where they have been; and if we take that quote and then ask ourselves what have we been told, we

have been told that the mission has been accomplished. The President went out and said it is all over. There have been 304 people killed in Iraq, 167 of them, more than half, since the mission was accomplished. It was this President on October 14, 2002, who said, "This is a man," meaning Saddam, "that we know has had connections with al Qaeda. This is a man who, in my judgment, would like to use al Qaeda as a forward army." Mr. Rumsfeld followed him right up and said, "Yes, there is a linkage between al Qaeda and Iraq." And Condoleezza Rice, not to be outdone, said, "There have been contacts between senior Iraqi officials and members of al Qaeda going back for actually quite a long time."

And then their story started to unravel. On September 16 of this year, almost 11 months later, the President comes out and says, "I have not seen any indication that would lead me to believe that I could say that Saddam Hussein was involved in the September 11 attacks." Condoleezza Rice jumped up again: "And we never claimed that Saddam Hussein had either . . . direction or control of 9-11. What we've said is that this was someone who supported terrorists, helped them train." And Mr. Bush the next day said, "There is no question that Saddam Hussein had al Qaeda ties. We have no evidence that Saddam Hussein was involved with the September 11 attacks."

The American people have been fed a PR campaign of misinformation from the very start. And while that has been going on, and I will have entered into the RECORD both the speech by Max Cleland and an article from the New York Newsday by Jimmy Breslin dated 23 September, while this has all been going on, our people have been dying.

Some of you have been out to the Vietnam Memorial, and those panels get carved with those names in there. One can go up to Walter Reed Hospital up on Georgia Avenue and see people without arms and legs, just like Senator Cleland. While we keep getting misinformation out of the White House, Ryan Carlock, specialist, 416th Transportation Company, died on September 10; Joe Robsky from Fort Irwin, California, died on September 10; Henry Ybarra from Austin, Texas, died. And they keep dying and they keep dying.

If we ask questions about this \$87 billion, it does not make us unpatriotic. It makes us care about these men and women.

[From the New York Newsday, Sept. 23, 2003]

THEY LIED AND MANY SOLDIERS DIED

(By Jimmy Breslin)

George Bush won't mention the names below in today's speech, nor will your glibble news and television people—the Pekinese of the Press.

Therefore we print promptly and thus prominently the names of American soldiers killed in Iraq and reported from Sept. 9 to Sept. 19:

Spc. Ryan G. Carlock, 25, 416th Transportation Co., 260 Quartermaster Battalion (Pe-

troleum Support), Hunter Army Airfield, Ga. Died in attack on truck Sept. 10. Home: Macomb, Ill.

Staff Sgt. Joe Robsky, 31, 759 Ordnance Co., Fort Irwin, Calif. Home is a mobile home park trailer in Elizaville, N.W. Died in Baghdad while trying to defuse a homemade bomb on Sept. 10. He volunteered for this duty because he didn't want children killed by land mines.

Sgt. Henry Ybarra III, 32, D Troop, 6th Squadron, 6th Cavalry. Home: Austin, Texas. Died when truck tire exploded, Sept. 11.

Marine Sgt. Kevin N. Morehead, 33 3rd Battalion, 5th Special Forces Group. Home: Little Rock, Ark. Died of wounds received when raiding enemy forces.

Sgt. 1st Class William M. Bennett, 35, 3rd Battalion, 5th Special Forces Group. Home: Little Rock, Ark. Died of wounds received when raiding enemy forces.

Sgt. Trevor A. Blumberg, 22, 1st Battalion, 504th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 82nd Airborne, Fort Bragg, N.C. Home: Canton, Mich. Died in attack on his vehicle in Baghdad on Sept. 14.

Staff Sgt. Kevin C. Kimberly, 31, 4th Battalion, 27th Field Artillery Regiment, North Creek, N.Y. Killed when his vehicle was hit by rocket-propelled grenade while on patrol in Baghdad Sept. 15.

Spc. Alyssa R. Peterson, 27, 311 Military Intelligence Battalion, 101st Airborne Division, Fort Campbell, Ky. Home: Flagstaff, Ariz. Died of wounds on Sept. 15 at Tel Afar.

Spc. James C. Wright, 27 Fourth Infantry Division, Fort Hood, Texas. Home: Delhi Township, Ohio. Died when vehicle hit by rocket-propelled grenade during ambush near Tikrit on Sept. 18.

George Bush told lies and they died. First, your government lied to ensure Bush's re-election. Who votes against a president in time of war? And even better, you get oil with the winning election.

So Bush lied to you. Not misstatements. Lies. He and his people threw away their honor and consciences to lie to the people. They had sworn to protect.

The lies of Washington put young men from Seymour, Tenn., and Maspeth, Queens and Palos Hills, Ill., into boxes. And that, dear reader, is quite a lie.

At the start, Bush claimed that Iraq had poison gas and was making nuclear weapons. Soon, they will poison us all and blow us up. His proof was documents forged by elementary-school pupils. Still, Bush used it in his State of the Union speech. Condoleezza Rice said it was only 23 words in a speech. What are you so concerned about?

The 23 words were only about nuclear bombs.

Look now at the lie that George Bush carries into the United Nations today:

We went into Iraq because they were part of the World Trade Center attack.

That's what they told you, and Americans, who honor their government, believed what their government told them. And so did all those young people as they were about to put up their lives in the desert.

On Oct. 14, 2002, Bush said, "This is a man [Saddam] that we know has had connections with al-Qaida. This is a man who, in my judgment, would like to use al-Qaida as a forward army."

Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld said, on Sept. 26, 2002, "Yes, there is a linkage between al-Qaida and Iraq."

Condoleezza Rice, the national security adviser, said on Sept. 25, 2002, "There have been contacts between senior Iraqi officials and members of al-Qaida going back for actually quite a long time."

They knew exactly what they were saying and what it would do. It was using a Big Lie in an age of screens and faxes. What did you

think it was, a government telling you the truth? Why should they do that?

At summer's end, suspicions rose. It was time to change the lie before it became a liability. How do you do that? By using the ultimate con: telling the truth.

Here in the world of professional lying is how you use the truth to defuse a lie when it becomes dangerous to keep: Suddenly, Donald Rumsfeld on Sept. 16 announced, "I've not seen any indication that would lead me to believe that I could say that Saddam Hussein was involved in the Sept. 11 attacks."

That same day, Condoleezza Rice jumped up and chirped, "And we have never claimed that Saddam Hussein had either . . . direction or control of 9/11. What we've said is that this was someone who supported terrorists, helped train them."

And then the next day, George Bush said, "There's no question that Saddam Hussein has al-Qaida ties. We have no evidence that Saddam Hussein was involved with the Sept. 11 attacks."

So the three now say that they never said that Hussein was involved in the World Trade Center attack. Look up what we said. We never said it.

Of course they did. Anybody who thinks they didn't is a poor fool. Take a half-word out of a sentence, replace it with a smug smile or chin motion and the meaning is there. Saddam was in on the Trade Center with bin Laden. Of course Bush and his people said it. Then go to the whip, go to the truth.

Only the strong memory is an opponent, and there are few of them. Otherwise, the only thing that can remind people and maybe even inflame them are these dead bodies coming back from Iraq to Heber, Calif. They arrive here in silence. We have no idea of how many wounded are in government hospitals with no arms or legs. You never hear Bush talking about them. He often acts as if subjects like this have nothing to do with him.

[From the Atlanta Journal-Constitution, Sept. 15, 2003]

DISASTER IN THE DESERT

(By former Senator Max Cleland, D-Georgia)

"The public had been led into a trap from which it will be hard to escape with dignity and honor. They have been tricked into it by a steady withholding of information," he said. "The Baghdad communiqués are belated, insincere, incomplete. Things have been far worse than we have been told, our administration more bloody and inefficient than the public knows." He added: "We are today not far from a disaster"—T.E. Lawrence, The Sunday Times of London, August 22, 1920.

Let me see if I can get this straight.

The President of the United States decides to go to war against a nation led by a brutal dictator supported by one party rule. That dictator has made war on his neighbors. The President decides this is a threat to the United States. In his campaign for President he gives no indication of wanting to go to war. In fact, he decries the over extension of American military might and says other nations must do more. However, unbenounced to the American public, the President's own Pentagon advisors have already cooked up a plan to go to war. All they are looking for is an excuse.

An element of the U.S. military is under attack. The President, his Secretary of Defense and his advisors sell the idea to Congress and the American people that it is time to go to war. Based on faulty intelligence, cherry-picked information is fed to Congress and the American people. The President goes on national television to explain the case for

war, using as part of the rationale for the war an incident that never happened. The Congress buys the bait hook, line and sinker and passes a resolution giving the President the authority to use "all necessary means" to prosecute the war.

The war is started with an air and ground attack. Initially there is optimism. The President says we are winning. The cocky, self-assured Secretary of Defense says we are winning. As a matter of fact, the Secretary of Defense promises the troops will be home soon.

However, the truth on the ground that the soldiers face in the war is different than the political policy that sent them there. They face increased opposition from a determined enemy. They are surprised by terrorist attacks, suicide bombers, village assassinations, increasing casualties and growing anti-American sentiment. They find themselves bogged down in a guerrilla land war, unable to move forward and unable to disengage because there are no allies in the war to turn the war over to. There is no plan B. There is no exit strategy. Military morale declines. The President's popularity sinks and the American people are increasingly frustrated by the cost of blood and treasure poured into a never-ending war.

Sound familiar? It does to me!

The President was Lyndon Johnson.

Got Ya!

The cocky, self-assured Secretary of Defense was Robert McNamara.

Got ya again!

The Congressional resolution was the Gulf of Tonkin resolution.

You are catching on!

The war was the war that I, John Kerry, Chuck Hagel, John McCain and three and-a-half million other Americans of our generation were caught up in. It was the scene of America's longest war. It was also the locale of the most frustrating outcome of any war this Nation has ever fought.

Unfortunately, the people who drove the engine to get into the war in Iraq never served in Vietnam.

Not the President.

Not the Vice-President.

Not the Secretary of Defense.

Not the Deputy Secretary of Defense.

Too bad. They could have learned some lessons.

First, they could have learned not to underestimate the enemy. The enemy always has one option you cannot control. He always has the option to die. This is especially true if you are dealing with true believers and guerrillas fighting for their version of reality—whether political or religious. They are what Tom Friedman of the New York Times calls the "non-deterables." If those non-deterables are already home in their country, they will be able to wait you out until you go home.

Second, if the enemy adopts a "hit and run" strategy designed to inflict maximum casualties on you, you may win every battle but the battles you fight (as Walter Lippman once said about the Vietnam War), can't win the war.

Third, if you adopt a strategy of not just pre-emptive strike but also pre-emptive war you own the aftermath. You better plan for it. You better have an exit strategy because you cannot stay there indefinitely unless you make it the 51st state. If you do stay an extended period of time, you then become an occupier, not a liberator. That feeds the enemy against you.

Fourth, if you adopt the strategy of pre-emptive war, your intelligence must be not just "damn good," as the President has said it must be "bullet proof," as Secretary Rumsfeld claimed the administration had against Saddam Hussein. Anything short of that saps credibility.

Fifth, if you want to know what is really going on in the war, ask the troops on the ground not the policy makers in Washington. The "ground truth" as the soldiers call it, is always more accurate than the truth expounded through the mouths of those who plan the war and have a political, personal and emotional investment in their policy. They will bend any fact, even intelligence, to their own ends. If the ground truth and the policy truth begin to diverge, "Shock and Awe" will turn into what one officer in Iraq has described as, "Shock and Awe S---!"

Sixth, in a democracy instead of truth being the first casualty in war, it should be the first cause of war. It is the only way the Congress and the American people can cope with getting through it. As credibility is strained, support for the war and support for the troops goes down hill. Continued loss of credibility drains troop morale, the media becomes more suspicious, the public becomes more incredulous and the Congress is reduced to hearings and investigations.

Instead of learning the lessons of Vietnam, where all of the above happened, the President, the Vice-President, the Secretary of Defense and the Deputy Secretary of Defense, have gotten this country into a disaster in the desert. They attacked a country that had not attacked us. They did so on intelligence that was faulty, misrepresented and highly questionable. A key piece of that intelligence was an out-right lie which the White House put into the President's State of the Union speech. These officials have over-extended the American military, including the Guard and the Reserve and expanded the United States Army to the breaking point. A quarter of a million troops are committed to the Iraq war theater, most bogged down in Baghdad. Morale is declining and casualties continue to increase. In addition to the human cost, the funding of the war costs a billion dollars a week adding to the additional burden of an already depressed economy. The President has declared "major combat over" and sent a message to every terrorist, "Bring them on." As a result, he has lost more people in his war than his father did in his and there is no end in sight. Military commanders are left with extended tours of duty for servicemen and women, told long ago they were going home, and keeping American forces on the ground where they have become sitting ducks in a shooting gallery for every terrorist group in the Middle East.

Welcome to Vietnam Mr. President. Sorry you didn't go when you had the chance.

SUPPORT H.R. 3156, EXTENDING UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. WU) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. WU. Mr. Speaker, for most of the last 2 years, my home State of Oregon has had the highest unemployment rate in the Nation, and thousands of Oregonians have tried for a year or more to find a job without success.

This coming Saturday, 12,000 unemployed Oregonians will lose all of their unemployment benefits with the expiration of an Oregon unemployment program which provides assistance when Federal unemployment benefits run out. The estimates are that 400 additional Oregonians per week will lose all unemployment benefits starting next week and for every week there-

after. For unemployed Oregonians, it is these benefits that keep their kids in college, prevent the loss of a home, car, or vital health care.

Mr. Speaker, a jobless economic recovery does not help the unemployed. I challenge this Congress to do more to help our jobless Americans. I challenge this Congress to pass H.R. 3156, my bill to extend Federal unemployment benefits by an additional 13 weeks.

PROBLEMS WITH THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Utah (Mr. MATHESON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. MATHESON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to bring attention to an issue of utmost importance to my home State of Utah and to the rest of this country.

As we are now in the beginning of a new school year, I am very troubled by news from across our State about the implementation of the No Child Left Behind Act. The concepts and ideas behind this Federal education reform legislation remain just as good as they were 2 years ago when, with bipartisan support, Congress enacted the bill at the urging of President Bush. Despite the bill's good intentions, such as improving student achievement, increasing teacher quality, and providing parents with greater options, the legislation implementation has strayed off course.

How bad is it? Under the strictest interpretation of standards, 78 out of the 83 schools in Utah's Jordan School District will be designated as failing schools. In rural Utah it is questionable whether any junior high or high school will be able to meet all of the criteria. This just does not make sense. I have met with teachers, principals, parents, school board members, and superintendents throughout my State, and I know first hand about the good work that is done every day in our schools. Utah's schools face challenges based on large class sizes and low State funding. Now, due to the imposition of a new series of underfunded Federal requirements, they face the possibility of being labeled as "failures."

There are two basic problems with the implementation of the No Child Left Behind Act. First, the act promised significant Federal funding to assist local schools in meeting new requirements. In fact, a strong commitment to fund the No Child Left Behind Act requirements was critical in garnering overwhelming bipartisan support for the legislation. Unfortunately, when it came time to provide the actual funding, Congress fell short by \$9 billion. At a time when State budgets are already tight, Federal requirements to push schools to do more with less set up our schools to fail.

Second, as with any complex law enacted by Congress, the Federal agency responsible for administration develops